THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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American Embassy,
Guatemala City, Guatemala, December 19, 1952

OFFICIAL - INFORMAL

CONFIDENTIAL - SECURITY INFORMATION

Dear Ed Clark:

I desire to thank you for your letter of December 8 enclosing a memorandum of conversation prepared by Milton Wells covering the talk between the Secretary, Ambassador Toriello and myself which took place in New York on December 1.

The memorandum is quite comprehensive and a first-rate job. As I recall, the conversation developed in a slightly different sequence from that given in the memorandum but all the points of substance are there.

If I remember correctly, Mr. Toriello took up as his initial item the personality and views of the new Foreign Minister. We then guided him into a discussion of political conditions in Guatemala. He volunteered the opinion that President Arbenz' policy was directed toward allowing the Communists to discredit themselves. He observed that President Arbenz did not wish to adopt the methods adopted by El Salvador where the Government had shot some 1400 persons. Guatemala preferred giving the people "bread, instead of lead".

Edward T. Clark, Esquire,
Acting Officer in Charge,
Central American and Panama Affairs,
Department of State,
Washington 25, D. C.

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He discounted the strength of the Communists and referred to the candidacy of José Manuel Fortuny for Congress in the Department of Guatemala. He thought that Fortuny would be defeated.

Asked about the candidacy of Pellecer in Escuintla, he replied, somewhat illogically, that Pellecer had gained the confidence of the workers there in years past and would probably be elected.

The Secretary asked about the Communist Party. Mr. Toriello spoke about it at some length but in very general terms and expressed the opinion that it did not constitute a risk for the United States.

He thought it might be helpful if the State Department could correct false opinions about Guatemala. I suggested that the U. S. press would be as unlikely to publish opinions coming from us as from any Guatemalan source. It came to its own conclusions. The way to counter adverse publicity was by acts. If, for example, Fortuny were defeated, the U.S. press would undoubtedly report it, since this would be news.

These of course are minor points and I merely cite them to complete the record.

I enclose an extra copy which you may care to send on to Milton Wells.

Sincerely yours,

Rudolf Schoenfeld

Rudolf E. Schoenfeld

Enclosure

Not attached to our file copy